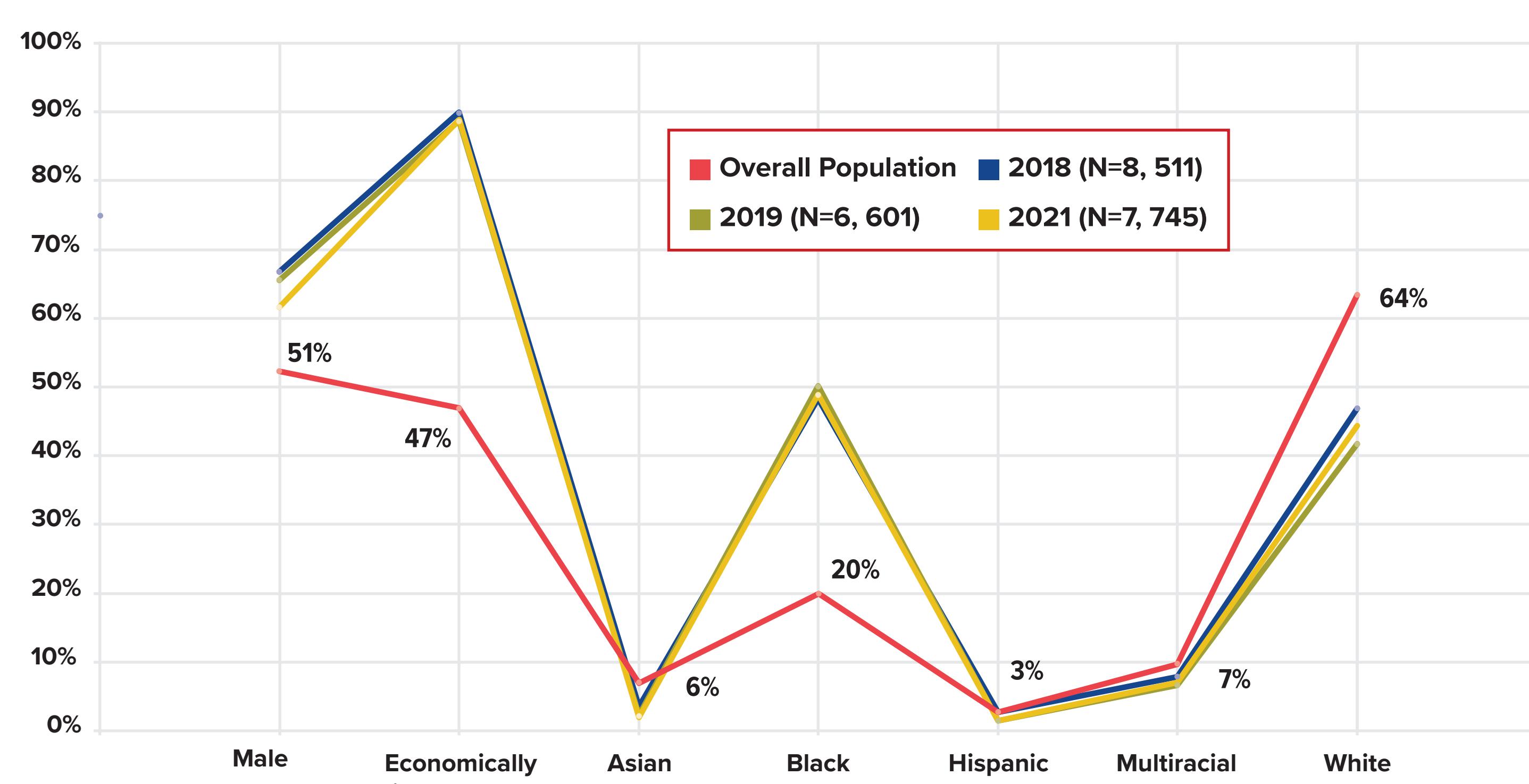


STUDENT VOICE

We collaborated with Akron Public Schools to launch the Summit County Youth Coalition (SCYC), an innovative initiative designed to empower students to drive systemic change in education. Thirty (30) high school students were selected for the inaugural cohort and were trained in Collaborative Improvement processes and action research.



Disparities in School Discipline – Summit County Public Schools

School suspensions are associated with a reduced likelihood of high school graduation, increased chronic absenteeism, increased student alienation and an increased risk for contact with the juvenile and adult justice systems.

Research conducted by SEI in 2022 showed that males, Black students and students who are economically disadvantaged are disproportionately impacted by in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Trends across years were nearly identical, including pre- and post-pandemic years. These issues were echoed by students in the SCYC.

SCYC Survey Results

Focused on addressing behavior and inequities in discipline practices, SCYC developed and distributed a 39-item survey to 299 peers in five APS high schools to assess school climate and perceptions of discipline. These trends underscore the need for interventions and strategies to improve student discipline practices.

School rules are applied to all students.

45%

Discipline at school is fair.

31%

All students are treated the same, regardless of their family income.

37%

Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully, regardless of race, gender and ability.

50%

Adults working at this school reward students for positive behavior.

53%

What can we do differently?

Studies of restorative justice practices have shown that involving students in solutions and responses to conflict and harm can increase feelings of safety at school, attendance rates and equity in discipline. It can also reduce violence and referrals for suspension, provide a foundation for youth development and greatly foster social emotional learning skills.

What's next for Student Voice?

The coalition will use survey results to propose interventions and strategies which they plan to present as recommendations to the APS superintendent and school board. This year, SCYC has exemplified SEI's commitment to amplifying student voices and fostering meaningful, student-led changes in educational policies and practices within Summit County.



Scan the QR code to view our data dashboards and reports.